

From: privateartmn
To: usstmc@gmail.com; wendyLunderwood@gmail.com; [#CI-StPaul_Ward5](mailto:Noecker_Rebecca_(CI-StPaul);); [#CI-StPaul_Ward4](mailto:Pereira_Luis_(CI-StPaul);); gmcmtrey07@gmail.com; cedric.baker@gmail.com; kristinemariongrill@gmail.com; blindeke@gmail.com; #CI-StPaul_Ward1; [#CI-StPaul_Ward7](mailto:nmhood@gmail.com); adejoy@esndc.org; [#CI-StPaul_Ward6](mailto:aquanettaa@gmail.com); #CI-StPaul_Ward3; jake.reilly76@gmail.com; tramhoang.sppc@gmail.com; aperryman@genesysworks.org; k.mouacheupao@gmail.com; mieeta@gmail.com; zhijun.yang@metrostate.edu; [Butler_Sonja_\(CI-StPaul\);](mailto:Butler_Sonja_(CI-StPaul);) luiserangelmorales@gmail.com; simon.taghioff@gmail.com; Jeff.risberg@gmail.com
Subject: FW: Please vote against ZF# 21-269-061, 695 Grand CUP and Variances
Date: Thursday, July 8, 2021 10:31:15 AM
Attachments: RAW


Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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Date: 7/8/21 9:53 AM (GMT-06:00)

To: aquanettaa@gmail.com, tramhoang.sppc@gmail.com, blindeke@gmail.com, gmcmtrey07@gmail.com, k.mouacheupao@gmail.com, aperryman@genesysworks.org, mieeta@gmail.com, Jeff.risberg@gmail.com, wendyLunderwood@gmail.com, zhijun.yang@metrostate.edu, luis.pereira@ci.stpaul.mn.us, Sonja.butler@ci.stpaul.mn.us, cedric.baker@gmail.com, adejoy@esndc.org, kristinemariongrill@gmail.com, nmhood@gmail.com, luiserangelmorales@gmail.com, jake.reilly76@gmail.com, usstmc@gmail.com, simon.taghioff@gmail.com, ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us, rebecca.noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us, ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us, ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us, ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us, ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us, ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Subject: Please vote against ZF# 21-269-061, 695 Grand CUP and Variances

 privateartmn@gmail.com Susan St John
25 Saint Albans Street South
Saint Paul, MN 55105

From: [Susan St John](mailto:Susan.St.John)
To: mieeta@gmail.com; Jeff.risberg@gmail.com; wendylunderwood@gmail.com; zhijun.yang@metrostate.edu; [Pereira, Luis \(CI-StPaul\)](mailto:Pereira.Luis(CI-StPaul)); [Butler, Sonja \(CI-StPaul\)](mailto:Butler.Sonja(CI-StPaul)); cedric.baker@gmail.com; adejoy@esndc.org; kristinemariongrill@gmail.com; nmhood@gmail.com; luiserangelmorales@gmail.com; jake.reilly76@gmail.com; usstm@gmail.com; simon.taghioff@gmail.com; [#CI-StPaul_Ward1](#); [Noecker, Rebecca \(CI-StPaul\)](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward3](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward4](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward5](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward6](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward7](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Please vote against ZF# 21-269-061, 695 Grand CUP and Variances
Date: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:38:08 AM

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Susan St John** <privateartmn@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 8, 2021 at 11:10 AM
Subject: Fwd: FW: Please vote against ZF# 21-269-061, 695 Grand CUP and Variances
To: Susan ST JOHN <privateartmn@gmail.com>

The variances requested by the developers of 695 Grand Ave project are "spot variances" and as such declared illegal by Minnesota government.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Susan St John** <privateartmn@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 8, 2021 at 11:06 AM
Subject: Fwd: FW: Please vote against ZF# 21-269-061, 695 Grand CUP and Variances
To: Susan ST JOHN <privateartmn@gmail.com>

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [privateartmn](#)
To: [Noecker, Rebecca \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Opposition to requested variances to current zoning regulations requested by Proposed big box Development for 695 Grand Avenue
Date: Monday, June 28, 2021 8:00:57 AM

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: privateartmn <privateartmn@gmail.com>
Date: 6/26/21 2:22 PM (GMT-06:00)
To: PED-ZoningCommitteeSecretary@ci.stpaul.mn.us, PED-ZONINGCOMMITTEESECRETARY@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Subject: Opposition to requested variances to current zoning regulations requested by Proposed big box Development for 695 Grand Avenue

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: privateartmn <privateartmn@gmail.com>
Subject: : Opposition to requested variances to current zoning regulations requested by Proposed big box Development for 695 Grand Avenue

Sent to...PED-ZONINGCOMMITTEESECRETARY@CI.STPAUL.MN.US

Subject: Re: Proposed big box development for 695 Grand Avenue

Opposition to 695 Grand Avenue/ Dixie's proposed Development requesting

multiple variances to current zoning restrictions

- * I support the East Grand Avenue Overlay and existing zoning regulations.
- * I am against the proposed development for 695 Grand Ave./ Dixie's

It is too big, too cheap and badly designed, not in keeping w the city zoning restrictions and most upsetting does not fit with the neighborhood's character and national preservation status.

It will ruin St Albans Street South forever and even more destructive SET A BAD PRECEDENT FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT on Grand Avenue.

This kind of copycat cheap

" accountant" designed building proposed by the developer is seen all over the suburbs and has, in fact, destroyed the charm and interest of shoppers in Uptown in Mpls where great businesses are moving out as fast as they can.

Made from the same cheap materials as trailer homes, this proposed big box structure is clearly not appropriate to be placed (actually plunked -- requiring no site specific architectural design) in front of and next door to classic historic architecture on Saint Albans Street South.

St Albans Street's Clarence Johnson 1880 St Albans Row is a destination for travelers and neighbors alike. It is St Paul's most photogenic Street along with historic Summit Avenue.

Development proposed at 695 Grand will overpower and destroy the livability and most upsetting the irreplaceable vibe of this wonderful area and why?

Why would you want to destroy the timeless beauty and valued aesthetic of St Paul for cheap (illegal-proposed structure is against current zoning restrictions) big box development that does harm to what the city is known and valued for. I AM AGAINST IT.

SUBMITTED BY

Susan St John, Private Art
25 South St Albans St
Saint Paul, 55105
privateartmn@gmail.com
651.491.4431

A long time home owner, resident and a business owner in the Summit Hill and Crocus Hill neighborhoods in Saint Paul

From: [Susan St John](#)
To: [Noecker, Rebecca \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: 605 Grand Grand Proposed development
Date: Thursday, July 8, 2021 11:59:41 AM

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

This proposed big box development will make for a much less "Grand" Grand Avenue. Think about what has made Saint Paul preferred over Minneapolis. Historic architecture and the livability of aesthetically well designed new spaces.

If one looks at Uptown in Minneapolis we see what big box "accountant" designed buildings have realized.....businesses, shoppers and residents fleeing as fast as they can. Please do not vote this damaging trend into our special St Paul.

Susan St John

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Private Art | Susan St. John
25 St. Albans St. South
Saint Paul, MN 55105
T: 651-227-1449
M: 651-491-4431
privateartmn@gmail.com

From: privateartmn
To: [Noecker, Rebecca \(CI-StPaul\)](mailto:Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us)
Date: Monday, June 28, 2021 12:04:25 PM

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: privateartmn <privateartmn@gmail.com>
Date: 6/28/21 11:08 AM (GMT-06:00)
To: rebecca.noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Subject:

Please find the letter below outlining our neighborhood protest of the development plans for 695 Grand Avenue and the implications of this kind of development for the future of Grand Avenue as a vibrant neighborhood and small business center in St Paul.

With personal views.:

The unprofessional treatment and the skewed outgoing public notices and statements and pre-planned decisions that we--protesting neighbor/residents- have witnessed and received from the leadership of the SHA are not representative and do not reflect the overall views of the majority of Summit and Crocus Hill residents.

This is disturbing. We have documented and recorded this leadership bias and observed ongoing unprofessional action re this project as we support and advocate for the missing middle and appropriate scale in the proposed development.

As citizens of Saint Paul and friends promoting and supporting this beautiful city and its authentic quality of life, we expect and deserve and need unbiased representation and unbiased, in depth professional study undergirding the planning and decisionmaking regarding zoning and land use decisions for this very important part of Saint Paul and all of the city. Its future livability and timeless value are at stake. This is critical for all of us as change is in the forefront for America's cities and our future.

Respectfully submitted as citizen neighbor and business owner....

Susan St John,
privateartmn@gmail.com
651.491.4431
25 South St Albans Street
Saint Paul

To: Peter Kenefick
VIA EMAIL
cc Summit Hill Association, Ari Parritz

RE: 695 Grand Proposaler below

We are writing to express our objection to the complete disregard you have shown for feedback from the neighbors. We expressed concern regarding the scale of the project, and you have returned with an **even taller building**. You **increased the ceiling heights on the main floor and for the penthouse**, so now the building height is 59' -10" instead of 56'-8" (to the top of the fifth floor roof). The first floor does not adjust for the hill, so the height at the corner of Grand and St Albans the building will be 3'-6" higher, rising 64'-4" from the sidewalk, just a person's height (5'-8") shy of **double the height limit**. We would welcome a mixed use development that would enhance Grand Avenue and Summit Hill, but this **proposal will severely alter the essential character and damage the livability, and harm the property values, and the locally designated historic district located across the alley**. Moreover, there are no practical difficulties preventing compliance with the zoning code. There are no unique circumstances or hardships caused by this large, evenly sloped parcel. This proposal is clearly and grossly **out of scale for the size of the lot and its location**.

We are a group of neighbors who have met and had many discussions in these three weeks since the first meeting. We represent our "Block Club" –households with frontage on the one way stretch of St Albans (both sides) as well as on the "shared alley" block bounded by Grotto-St Albans-Summit-Grand. It's a "one and a half block" sized block club. Our block club has had input from homeowner, renter, multi-generational, and co-housing households. Our block club includes varied household types: traditional 2-story and 3-story multifamily flats, a modern 4-unit multifamily with an elevator, converted mansion multifamily, townhouse, carriage house (with windows right on the alley), single family, duplex. The dominant form is multifamily. We have had three meetings: two outdoor socially distant meetings and a zoom meeting to increase our reach. We have had robust discussions on the sidewalk and in the alley, as well as on the computer via shared online tools and polls.

We can't in this letter fully summarize all the issues expressed. But we can convey the dominant themes.

The biggest concern and criticism of this proposed design center on four areas: building bulk and form, negative impacts on the neighborhood, lack of compliance with existing zoning rules and regulations, and market concerns.

Among those, the underlying, most repeated concern is the building size and form. And, it bears emphasizing that **the too-large scale** (extra tall height combined with near complete lot coverage) **creates or contributes to all the other problems**.

If there can be one overarching recommendation it is this: **the project should be scaled to match the neighborhood**, within the zoning requirements including the East Grand Avenue Overlay district requirements.

Thank you for time and consideration

SAGGS Block Club

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Susan St John](#)
To: [Noecker, Rebecca \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Date: Tuesday, June 15, 2021 9:12:24 AM

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Re: proposed development project at 695 Grand Avenue Saint Paul, MN Inbox



Ms.Noecker,
Please have my letter be a part of the record of public comments for the City Council Hearing.
Thank you
Susan St. John

--
Private Art | Susan St. John
25 St. Albans St. South
Saint Paul, MN 55105
T: 651-227-1449
M: 651-491-4431
privateartmn@gmail.com

To: Rebecca Noecker:
Please be advised I am opposed to the proposed development at 695 Grand Avenue, Saint Paul Mn 55105.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan C St John

Private Art
25 St Albans Street

Saint Paul, MN 555105

Dixies/695 Grand Rezoning: A Dangerous, Damaging Precedent



The proposed building is too big, too tall, and too much. It is designed to be expensive. It is designed to take value from the neighborhood, instead of adding to it.

It is important to understand two things:

- (1) The **rezoning** is only to create a larger, more intense, and more expensive building. The conditional use permit, and variances are dependent on the rezoning. A smaller, compatible mixed use building could be built “by right” and would be welcomed.
- (2) It is the **much too big scale** of the building that directly creates the unreasonable negative impacts.

The increased bulk, height, and size of the building create substantial negatives:

- The proposed size directly increases the cost of buildings per square foot, resulting in luxury-priced housing. This project will decrease the economic diversity of Summit Hill. The precedent will create economic pressure that leads to the loss of lower priced housing and retail (locally owned).
- The increased intensity will create dangerous traffic and parking conditions that will reduce pedestrian safety and walkability. Dangerous traffic levels and parking congestion will hinder street maintenance and create significant adverse impacts for residents as well as business customers and employees.
- The increased encroachment by taller heights and ignored setbacks is considerable, and is amplified by the bottom-up U-Shape shape of the

building that places the tallest walls closest to residential neighbors. This design maximizes the loss of privacy and prevents reasonable enjoyment. This will result in a loss of property value.

- The backwards solar orientation places the the tallest walls where they cast maximum shadows. The tallest walls are along the north. Required shadow step backs are ignored. The design of this project will block sunlight, casting permanent, all-day shadows for months at a time on neighboring properties. If the zoning code were followed, these harms would be avoided.
- The size and bulk of this proposal will harm the historic district, which is the defining “brand” for Grand Avenue businesses, and the essential character of Summit Hill, and a tourist draw for the entire City of St Paul.

If the zoning code were followed, the project would have positive impact on residential neighbors, local businesses on Grand Avenue, *and* provide more housing. The only reason given for the increase is “economic viability” —i.e. to increase the profits of the developer.

Learn more at www.ABetterWay-StP.com

Please call the City Council and tell them to **vote against** the rezoning Dixie’s/695 project.

Voice Mail (Voicemails will be transcribed and attached in writing.)

651-266-6805

Email

Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us

There is no actual, live public comment allowed at the City Council for this proposal. All information provided in the email and voicemails will be added to the public record and reviewed by the councilmembers

Statistics: What's wrong with the Dixies Proposal?

The developer is seeking to change all the rules in order to exceed all the existing limits, in every direction.

- **Building Size & Site**
 - The developer is proposing a footprint 125% of the allowed and a total Floor Area 163% larger.
 - The current height limit is 36 feet. The Dixies Development, at five-stories and 60 feet, proposes to more than double the height of its closest neighbor, a 2-story brick apartment providing affordably priced rental housing
 - Setbacks—only 3 feet from the sidewalk of narrow, residential St Albans, with a 64 foot height along this narrow side street
 - Required Traditional Neighborhood design standards are not being met – especially “shadow step backs” from footnote (e)
- **Traffic/Parking:**
 - Main ingress/egress to Residential Parking: less than 1 per unit-- 68 parking spots for 80 housing units;
 - Commercial parking: currently the 3 restaurants have 60 spaces; the proposal is 4 retail spaces with only 31 spaces
 - St Albans is a narrow one-way that is parked at 85%-100% presently; snow plowing and street maintenance are already negatively impacted by the intense use of on-street parking.
- **Anti-Affordability:**
 - **Median rent in Summit Hill is \$920 per month**, which often includes heat and parking
 - **Median rent in proposal is \$1750 per month, plus \$175 for parking, plus heat: >\$1925**
- **Establishing a precedent that leads to further projects that degrades the area's charm**
 - Developer's building design better suited for suburban areas detracts from the unique character of the neighborhood
 - Developments need to complement the eclectic nature of the area
 - The East Grand Overlay had strong support in a recent survey by SHA.
 - The plans fail to protect the historic character of the Summit Hill neighborhood and overlapping local, state and federal historic districts

What do we support?

We support **compatible development** that will **add more housing in a more equitable way** ... Compatible scale development that will support local business, a vibrant Grand Avenue, and a walkable, livable neighborhood for residents & visitors & employees.

Compatible Development:

- **Strengthen and add to existing density and housing options at a compatible scale**
 - Add housing density to grow and revitalize Grand Avenue
- **Strengthen and add to economic diversity of housing options Summit Hill**
 - Support a mix of multifamily housing choices
- **Strengthen and add to economic vitality of Grand Ave, Summit Hill and Saint Paul**
 - Support small businesses
- Developments that don't have adverse impacts on the neighborhood